



Bernalillo County Public Information Department

• News Release •

Immediate Release

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Commissioner Wayne Johnson to Propose Changes to the 2015 Waste Water Requirements

Bernalillo County- Costly upgrades and a cut-off date for septic system compliance are up for discussion. In 2000 the Bernalillo County Board of Commissioners passed an ordinance that required residents to bring their septic systems up to code by the year 2015, but this date now has one commissioner questioning the necessity of a strict timeline. The Waste Water Requirements Ordinance has been amended several times since its adoption. The most recent changes occurred in 2006, but the "2015" date has not yet been addressed.

The County's Environmental Health Department says the majority of the people impacted by this ordinance are homeowners in the East Mountains. **"The significant drop in Bernalillo County property values coupled with the difficulty of obtaining credit make the 2015 requirement to upgrade all septic systems an unmanageable financial burden on home owners,"** says District 5 Commissioner Wayne Johnson. **"It's essential that we protect our groundwater through common sense measures that encourage residents to properly maintain their systems and bring them up to code upon system failure. Our goal is compliance not retribution. I'm hoping my fellow commissioners will join me in encouraging residents to maintain their system, without forcing them to replace fully functioning septic systems."**

The amendments still focus on bringing residents into compliance, but in keeping with the state code, system upgrades would only be required upon system failure. The Waste Water Requirements Ordinance will continue to protect groundwater by requiring all new septic systems to meet the increased standards of 2006. At the May 10 commission meeting, Commissioner Johnson will present the amendments to the ordinance with the hope that the board will allow the amendments to be published and receive public comment. It will be at least 30 days before the commission will vote on enacting the amendments.

To view the proposed amendments or submit a comment visit www.bernco.gov

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